

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a composite yarn, ~~comprising at least one elastic yarn covered with at least one covering yarn,~~ and automatically replacing spools of elastic yarn, the method comprising yarn characterized by:

[[a.]] providing a first spool of a first elastic yarn; [[and]]

5        feeding said first elastic yarn to an interlacing jet, said interlacing jet covering said first elastic yarn with at least one ~~where it is covered with said~~ covering yarn to ~~produce said form~~ a composite yarn;

winding said composite yarn ~~which is wound~~ on a developing cop;

[[b.]] providing a second spool of a second elastic yarn;

10        [[c.]] ~~when the first spool of elastic yarn must be replaced with the second spool of elastic yarn,~~ interrupting composite yarn feeding to said developing cop and replacing the developing cop with a new tube when said first spool of elastic yarn is replaced with said second spool of elastic yarn;

15        [[d.]] inserting [[the]] said second elastic yarn in said interlacing jet to resume ~~therewith the formation of~~ forming said composite yarn, said covering yarn moving continuously, said second elastic yarn being joined to said continuously moving covering yarn ~~which moves continuously;~~

20        [[e.]] starting winding composite yarn on said new tube, whereby said first spool of elastic yarn is automatically replaced with said second spool of elastic yarn when said first spool of elastic yarn is empty.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, wherein said ~~characterized in that the~~ first spool is arranged in a working position and the second spool is arranged in a standby position, ~~and that~~ said second spool ~~[[is]]~~ being carried to said working position, ~~[[and]]~~ said first spool ~~[[is]]~~ being removed from said working position when the first spool must be replaced.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized by~~ wherein ~~withholding~~ the initial free end of said second elastic yarn is held in a retaining member~~[[,]]~~ before ~~replacing~~ inserting the second elastic yarn in said interlacing jet.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized by~~ wherein collecting at least the covering yarn fed via said interlacing jet during the time elapsing between the winding interruption of the developing cop and the start of winding of the composite yarn on said new tube.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said second elastic yarn is joined to the covering yarn in said interlacing jet.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the initial free end of the second elastic yarn~~[[,]]~~ is withheld by said retaining member

downstream of the interlacing jet, with respect to the direction of feeding of the yarn through said interlacing jet.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said covering yarn is a multiple filament yarn.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said covering yarn is textured.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said covering yarn is fed along a feeding path from a feeding cop to said interlacing jet and textured along said feeding path.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized by~~ wherein ~~detecting~~ the end of the first elastic yarn is detected, and ~~[[by]]~~ stopping the feeding of the composite yarn to the developing cop and introducing the second elastic yarn in said interlacing jet upon detection of the end of the first elastic yarn.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ ~~the~~ wherein said covering yarn, which is continuously fed, is collected by being sucked into a suction conduit between stopping feeding composite yarn to the developing cop and starting

winding composite yarn on a new tube.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~  
~~at least~~ wherein said first elastic yarn is stretched before being fed to said interlacing jet.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in~~  
~~that~~ wherein said covering yarn and said first elastic yarn are passed side by side in a stretching  
area upstream of the interlacing jet and fed from said stretching area to the interlacing jet along  
a common feeding path.

14. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 13, ~~characterized in~~  
~~that~~ wherein ~~in said stretching area~~, the first elastic yarn and the covering yarn are passed  
through a nip formed by two stretching rollers located in said stretching area.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 3, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein:

the initial free end of the second elastic yarn is withheld by said retaining member  
downstream to the interlacing jet with respect to the feeding direction of the yarn through said  
interlacing jet;

a portion of the second elastic yarn is arranged alongside the first elastic yarn and the  
covering yarn between the stretching area and the interlacing jet; and

the second elastic yarn is pushed into said stretching area by the side of the covering yarn when feeding of the second elastic yarn to said interlacing jet is started.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the spool from which the elastic yarn is fed to the interlacing jet is ~~kept into rotation~~ rotated around its axis to unwind the yarn.

17. (Currently Amended) ~~Method~~ A method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the elastic yarn is unwound from the spool without rotating said spool around its axis.

18. (Currently Amended) A device for the production of a composite yarn, the device comprising ~~at least one elastic yarn covered by at least one covering yarn, comprising in combination:~~

5      [[-]] an interlacing jet, said interlacing jet ~~for reciprocally~~ joining [[the]] at least one covering yarn and [[the]] at least one elastic yarn to form a composite yarn;

    [[ -]] a defined feeding path of said covering yarn and a defined feeding path of said elastic yarn to said interlacing jet;

    [[ -]] a spool supporting means for arranging at least a first spool of elastic yarn and at least a second spool of elastic yarn, ~~spools of elastic yarn~~;

10      [[ -]] winding members, said winding members [[for]] winding the composite yarn on a developing cop;

[[~~-~~]] an interrupting device, said interrupting device [[for]] interrupting the feeding of composite yarn to said developing cop, said interrupting device [[and]] starting the winding of the composite yarn on a new winding tube;

15            a retaining member arranged in an area of said interlacing jet, said retaining member holding an initial free end of said elastic yarn of said second spool when said elastic yarn from said first spool feeds said interlacing jet; and

means for introducing said elastic yarn of said second spool into said interlacing jet  
             ~~characterized in that: said supporting means for the spools of elastic yarn are suitable~~  
20           ~~for arranging at least a first spool of elastic yarn and at least a second spool of elastic yarn; and~~  
             ~~that a retaining member is arranged near said interlacing jet to withhold an initial free end of~~  
             ~~the elastic yarn of said second spool while the yarn from said first spool is fed to said~~  
             ~~interlacing jet; and that means for introducing the elastic yarn of said second spool in said~~  
             ~~interlacing jet are provided.~~

19. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized by~~  
wherein a collection member for collecting the covering yarn which is fed substantially  
continuously while the complete cop of composite yarn is replaced with a new winding tube;  
~~said collection member.~~

20. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 19, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein said collection member is associated [[to]] with said interrupting device.

21. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein said spool supporting means ~~are designed and arranged to support~~ said first spool in  
a working position and said second spool in a standby position, ~~and to transfer said spool~~  
supporting means transferring said second spool from said standby position to said working  
5 position when said ~~second~~ first spool must be replaced said first spool.

22. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 21, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein said spool supporting means are provided with a translating movement from said  
standby position to said working position.

23. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein at least one texturing station is arranged along the feeding path of the covering yarn.

24. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein said retaining member of the initial free end of the elastic yarn of said second spool  
is combined with an introducing means for inserting said elastic yarn in the interlacing jet.

25. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, wherein  
~~characterized in that~~ movement of said retaining member is ~~equipped with a movement for~~  
inserting inserts said elastic yarn into said interlacing jet.

26. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 23, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said retaining member is arranged downstream of said interlacing jet with respect to the feeding direction of the yarn.

27. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized in that~~ ~~it comprises~~ further comprising a sensor for generating a signal for starting the replacement procedure of the first spool of elastic yarn and replacing it with a second spool of elastic yarn.

28. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 27, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said sensor detects the end of the elastic yarn of said first spool.

29. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said collecting member of the covering yarn comprises a suction member.

30. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized in that~~ ~~it comprises~~ further comprising a stretching unit crossed by said covering yarn and by said elastic yarn, upstream to said interlacing jet.

31. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 30, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said stretching unit comprises a pair of stretching rollers forming a nip crossed by said covering yarn and the elastic yarn from said first ~~spool~~ spool.



32. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 30, ~~characterized by~~  
wherein an inserting element, ~~which inserts~~ the elastic yarn of said second spool inside said  
stretching unit.

33. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein said interlacing jet comprises a cover, said cover being ~~which is~~ opened to insert the  
elastic yarn from said second spool.

34. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein a member for joining the head of an elastic yarn to the covering yarn is arranged  
upstream ~~[[to]]~~ of said interlacing jet.

35. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 34, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein said joining member consists of an auxiliary interlacing jet.

36. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according ~~at least~~ to claim 30,  
~~characterized in that~~ wherein an oven crossed by said covering yarn is arranged along the path  
of said covering yarn, upstream of said stretching unit, said oven ~~[[for]]~~ stabilizing the yarn.

37. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 18, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein an unwinding means ~~is provided to~~ rotates the spool from which the elastic yarn is fed

to said interlacing jet.

38. (Currently Amended) ~~Device~~ A device according to claim 37, ~~characterized in that~~  
wherein said unwinding means is an unwinding roller in contact with the outer surface of the  
spool being unwound.